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C O N F I D E N T I A L AMMAN 006507

SIPDIS

TREASURY FOR U/S TAYLOR

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/05/2007

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SUBJECT: JORDAN FINANCE AND FOREIGN MINISTERS ON WASHINGTON MEETINGS

11. (c) The Ambassador called on Foreign Minister Marwan Muasher on November 4 and on Finance Minister Michel Marto on November 5 to review their recent meetings in Washington on supplemental economic assistance for Jordan. Confirming the informal readouts the embassy has received by email, both were very pleased with the way things went. They said they were especially reassured by the serious, senior-level attention the United States is giving this issue.

12. (c) Marto and Muasher both said they completely understood the sensitivity of quoting specific figures and assured the Ambassador that they will be extremely discrete. They also confirmed that they will begin work at once on the list of five questions that came out of the meetings. (Marto asked for more clarity on the third question, regarding how assistance would be used to help ensure adequate budget resources.) They would be happy to welcome U.S. experts to Jordan for further technical work, with a goal of wrapping up a package by November 15.

13. (c) Muasher and Marto said that the financial package described by NSA Rice, U/S Larson and others would meet Jordan's needs. They said it was their understanding that in addition to a supplemental ESF package, the U.S. would continue its efforts to assure Jordan's access to alternative sources of supply if Iraqi oil shipments were cut off. Muasher said that, as discussed with A/S Burns, he had tried to reach Kuwaiti State Minister Shaikh Muhammad to follow-up on their discussions in Amman earlier this month on a Kuwaiti-Saudi-UAE oil package. While he had not yet heard back from Shaikh Muhammad, Muasher understood from A/S Burns that Saudi Arabia and the UAE appeared to be favorably disposed, but he thought an additional high-level intervention by the United States would be necessary.

14. (c) Marto was also very pleased with his meeting with U/S Taylor. He personally welcomed the emphasis on economic conditionality he had heard in the meetings at State and Treasury, particularly regarding continued performance under the IMF stand-by program. This message, he said, helped him maintain the government's support for economic reform, including pension reform, under the Fund program. Noting that Prime Minister Abul Ragheb had told him that it would be politically impossible for the government to raise gasoline or diesel prices in the midst of a military conflict, Marto said that such conditionality helped his efforts to convince the government to eliminate subsidies and meet budget targets agreed with the IMF.

GNEHM